



Department of Justice

United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton
Middle District of Florida

Tampa	Orlando	Jacksonville	Ocala	Fort Myers
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE				CONTACT: STEVE COLE
August 27, 2010				PHONE: (813) 274-6136
http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/flm/pr				FAX: (813) 274-6300

OWNER OF EXCAVATING BUSINESS ADMITS DAMAGING THE OCALA NATIONAL FOREST

Tampa, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that Kevin T. Montgomery (age 44, formerly of Altoona, Florida) yesterday pleaded guilty to damaging the Ocala National Forest. Montgomery faces a maximum penalty of five years in federal prison.

According to the plea agreement, from 2004 to January 2007, Montgomery, who owned an excavating business, resided in the Shockley Heights subdivision of Altoona, Florida -- next to the Ocala National Forest. He used heavy equipment from his business to conduct numerous activities at his residence that damaged the Forest. Montgomery dug large pits in the forest and cleared bushes and trees. He parked numerous vehicles, both operable and inoperable, on Forest Service property and worked on them there, changing the engine oils and other fluids and thus affecting the forest. He also buried more than 5,000 pounds of refuse in the forest floor, burying car batteries, vehicle parts, two sinks, a shower pan, a propane stove, carpets, seat cushions, a toilet, sheet aluminum, copper tubing, and the frame of an Econoline Van. On several occasions, Montgomery conducted his damaging activities under the cover of darkness.

In May 2007, Montgomery learned that law enforcement was investigating his

activities, and he began removing items from the Forest Service property and conducting grading and leveling operations.

Soil and water samples from the area of the Forest damaged by Montgomery revealed high levels of pollutants, but it has been determined that these pollutants have not migrated into the groundwater beyond the area of the damage.

This case was investigated by United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Cherie L. Krigsman and Trial Attorney Lana N. Pettus of the Department of Justice's Environmental Crimes Section.